

The Holt, Rainhill

Bat Survey Report



For Cordage Estates Limited

June 2020

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Executive Summary

Contents	Summary
Site Location	The site is located off Holt Lane, Rainhill, Prescot in the metropolitan borough of Knowsley and is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SJ 48221 91847.
Proposals	Proposals include the construction of a new convenience store with an overall floor space of 343m ² on the existing carpark, re-configuration of the remainder of the carpark and demolition of the outbuilding associated with the public house. The current proposals indicate that the public house and vegetation adjacent to the existing carpark is to be retained as part of the development.
Existing Site Information	The public house (B1) and the outbuilding associated with the public house (B2) were found to have moderate potential to support roosting bats (WYG EA Report, 2020).
Scope of this Survey(s)	Two surveys consisting of a dusk emergence and dawn re-entry survey of both buildings to determine the presence or likely absence of roosting bats.
Results	- No evidence of roosting bats was observed within any parts of B1 or B2. - Low levels of commuting and foraging activity of common pipistrelle was recorded in the north-west and north-east boundaries of site.
Recommendations	- Demolition of B2 and refurbishment of B1 may be completed without seeking an EPSML from Natural England. - At least two bat boxes should be erected on the north-western aspect of the proposed convenience store to compensate for the loss of the potential roosting features of B2. - Roosting opportunities should be enhanced by installing an additional two bat boxes either as part of the boxes either on or within the new build convenience store or on the retained B1. - At least two bird boxes should be provided on site to compensate for the loss of B2. - Nesting opportunity should be enhanced through the incorporation of additional nest boxes where possible. - During the construction phase it is recommended that: - No night-time working is undertaken between the months of April to October inclusive (bat active season), where possible; and - If security lighting is necessary, lights triggered by motion sensors should be used and their coverage should be kept to a minimum (e.g. through use of lighting cowl). - The operational phase should use a sensitive lighting scheme to ensure potential commuting and foraging locations on site are maintained.



Glossary

ACIEEM	Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
BCT	Bat Conservation Trust
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Ecological Appraisal
EPSML	European Protected Species Mitigation Licence
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
HPI	Habitat(s) of Principal Importance
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
LERC	Local Ecological Record Centre
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
MCIEEM	Member of Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
Natura 2000 site	A European site designated for its nature conservation value
NE	Natural England
NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAP	Species Action Plan
SNCO	Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPI	Species of Principal Importance



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

WYG was commissioned by Cordage Group on behalf of Cordage Estates Limited on 30th April 2020 to complete bat emergence and re-entry surveys of the public house and associated outbuilding at the site known as The Holt, Rainhill (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The requirement for the surveys is based on recommendations made in an Ecological Appraisal (EA) undertaken in January 2020 (WYG, 2020). The surveys are required in order to support a planning application for the redevelopment of part of the site.

This report was prepared by WYG Consultant Ecologist Tom McClellan-West BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM and the conditions pertinent to it are provided in Appendix A.

1.2 Site Location

The site is located off Holt Lane, Rainhill, Prescot in the metropolitan borough of Knowsley and is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SJ 48221 91847 (see Figure 1). It comprised an operational public house, associated outbuilding and carpark, and small areas of ornamental shrub planting and amenity grassland. The site is immediately bounded by residential properties to the north and west, Holt Lane to the east, and the A57 to the south.

Within the wider landscape is a mosaic of residential and commercial properties and open green spaces attributed to local parks. Approximately 0.7km north is the Eccleston Park golf course, whilst Blundell’s Hill Golf Club and more rural landscapes lie approximately 1.2km south of site.

1.3 Development Proposals

Proposals include the construction of a new convenience store with an overall floor space of 343m² on the existing carpark. In addition re-configuration of the remainder of the carpark and demolition of the outbuilding associated with the public house is included in this proposal. The current proposals indicate that public house and vegetation adjacent to the existing carpark is to be retained as part of the development. The proposed development plans are given in Appendix B.

1.4 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to complete:

- Outline the legislative protection given to bats;
- Detail existing bat records and locally designated sites of relevance to bats within 2km of the site;
- Summarise the findings of the bat emergence and re-entry surveys and report in the presence or likely absence of bat species roosting at the site; and
- Provide an assessment of the potential ecological constraints to the proposed development works at the site and recommendations for further survey, avoidance, mitigation and enhancement where appropriate.



Note that scientific names are provided at the first mention of each species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.



2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 Previous Reports

An EA undertaken in January 2020 (WYG, 2020) has been reviewed to provide relevant background information, summarised in Section 3.1.1.

2.1.2 Local Ecological Records Centre

The desk study within the EA report (WYG, 2020) included a search for records for protected species, including bats and designated sites within a 2km radius of the site from the 'Merseyside Biobank' the LERC relevant to the site.

2.1.3 Online Resources

A search for relevant information was also made on MAGIC www.magic.gov.uk - DEFRA's interactive, web-based database for statutory designations and information on any EPSML applications that have been granted in the local area.

2.2 Field Surveys

2.2.1 Bat Presence / Likely Absence Surveys

The EA (WYG, 2020) identified that both B1 and B2 had moderate potential to support roosting bats and therefore two nocturnal emergence/re-entry surveys per building were undertaken in accordance with *Bat Conservation Trust, Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists, Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, 2016) hereafter referred to as the BCT Guidelines.

Dusk emergence / dawn re-entry surveys were undertaken in May and June 2020. Dates and times of surveys are given in Table 1 below. Surveys were undertaken by:

- Laura Holmes (LH) MCIEEM – WYG Principal Ecologist (Natural England (NE) Class 3 and 4 bat survey licences, reference numbers 2018-37932-CLS-CLS / 2017-30919-CLS-CLS);
- Phil Preston (PP) MCIEEM – WYG Principal Ecologist;
- Jessica Yorke (JY) ACIEEM – WYG Consultant Ecologist;
- Tom McClellan-West (TMW) ACIEEM – WYG Consultant Ecologist (NE Class 2 bat survey licence, reference number 2019-40871-CLS-CLS);
- Grace Bishop (GB) – WYG Assistant Ecologist;
- Mike Brown (MB) – WYG Field Ecologist;
- Andrew Crone (AC) – WYG Field Ecologist;
- Georgia Holmes (GH) – WYG Field Ecologist; and
- Tom Hill (TH) – WYG Field Ecologist.

Surveyors were positioned at vantage points around the buildings to enable observation of all potential roosting features. Surveyor locations are shown on Figure 2.

Each surveyor was equipped with an Elekon Batlogger M detector. This detector uses a broad-spectrum microphone and uses heterodyne to make bat calls audible while recording full spectrum

data to enable subsequent analysis. All bat activity heard and / or seen was noted by surveyors including time of observation.

As per BCT Guidelines dusk surveys began 15 minutes prior to sunset and continued for 1.5 hours after sunset. The dawn surveys began 1.5 hours prior to sunrise and continued until at least 15 minutes after sunrise. Weather conditions are given in Table 1. Bat calls were analysed where necessary by Tom McClellan-West ACIEEM using Bat Explorer software (v. 2.1.7.0).

Table 1: Date and weather conditions for bat emergence survey. Wind speed uses Beaufort scale. Cloud cover uses Oktas Scale.

Date of survey (Lead)	Sunset / Sunrise	Start (S)	Finish (F)	Temperature S/F	Rain S/F	Wind speed S/F	Cloud cover S/F
Building 1							
06/05/20 (TMW)	Sunset: 20:50	20:35	22:20	16°C/13°C	Dry/Dry	0/0	0/0
27/05/20 (TMW)	Sunrise: 04:53	03:23	05:08	11°C/10°C	Dry/Dry	1/1	0/1
Building 2							
14/05/20 (LH)	Sunset: 21:04	20:49	22:34	14°C/10°C	Dry/Dry	1/1	0/0
09/06/20 (PP)	Sunrise: 04:43	03:13	04:58	13°C /12°C	Dry/Dry	1/1	7/8

2.3 Limitations

Surveys were undertaken in May and June which is within the optimal May – August survey window (BCT Guidelines) and therefore are compliant with the levels of survey effort required for 'moderate' potential buildings. Each survey (per building) was separated by a period of at least 2 weeks and weather conditions were suitable for the entirety of each survey. Therefore, there were no constraints associated with survey timing or weather conditions.

As light levels drop after dusk, the visibility of features decrease over time. Conversely for dawn surveys, light levels are worst at the start of the survey, with visibility of features improving approaching sunrise. The first dusk survey revealed that security lighting mounted on the pub walls are on throughout the night. However, surveyors were positioned appropriately, covering all aspects of each building to ensure that any bats flying over or around the building would be recorded and therefore emergence or re-entries could still be identified appropriately. Site lines to potential roosting features identified within the EA (WYG, 2020) were also appropriately maintained. Based on the species assemblage recorded and their usual emergence times, it is thought that visibility was not a constraint during dusk surveys.

Bats vary their calls dependent on the habitats they fly in and on their activity (commuting, foraging, social interaction, etc). It is not always possible to identify bat calls to species level owing to the overlap of call parameters between some species and/or poor-quality recordings (e.g. brief and distant passes). In these cases, it is accepted that species are identified to genus level or group level (e.g. *Myotis*, *Myotis/Plecotus* and *Nyctalus/Eptesicus*) (BCT Guidelines). Where call parameters are



inconclusive the species has been labelled as 'unknown'. This allows the dataset to be interpreted accurately and transparently.

The details of this report will remain valid until **6th May 2021** (12 months from date of first survey) after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further updates are necessary. Factors that can affect validity include but are not limited to building deterioration creating further potential roosting features and the possible uptake of existing potential roosting features by bats within the year. Note that the recommendations within this report should be reviewed (and reassessed if necessary) should there be any changes to the red line boundary or development proposals which this report was based on.

3.0 Baseline Conditions

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Previous Reports

The buildings on site were appraised for their suitability to support roosting bats during the EA (WYG, 2020). These buildings were assessed as requiring further survey as summarised in Table 2 below. The locations of bat roost features is shown on Figure 2.

Table 2. Bat Roost Suitability Results

Building Reference	Building Description	Bat Roost Features and Figure 2 Reference Number	Bat Roost Suitability
1	This building comprised of a two-storey Victorian era public house building with multi-pitched tiled roof and brickwork walls. Attached to the main building is a multi-level flat roofed section, the roof comprised of roofing felt and walls of more modern brickwork relative to the main building. It is likely that the building has multiple roof voids, with two roof hatches identified during an asbestos survey (Eurosafes, 2019). These areas were inaccessible during the asbestos survey and therefore for safety reasons an internal bat survey was not completed. The public house is currently in use for commercial and residential purposes.	1 – Gap in soffit box 2 – Missing mortar in ridge tile 3 – Larger mortar gap in ridge tile 4 – Gap between roof tiles and soffit/fascia 5 – Gap behind alarm housing 6 – Mortar gaps in brickwork 7 – Mortar gap between upper bricks and soffit 8 – Gap adjacent to window frame 9 – Service holes 10 – Gap between window frame and brickwork 11 – Mortar gaps around rounded window 12 – Gap between fascia board and gutter hopper 13 – Decorative wall panel, with four distinct gaps 14 – Roofing tile gaps 15 – Inactive chimney blocks with open access and missing mortar 16 – Gap in lead flashing 17 – Vent panels 18 – Gap between gutter hopper and wall/fascia board gap 19 – Lifted roofing felt 25 – Gaps where brick, mortar and roofing felt meet	Moderate
2	A multi-height building, likely Victorian era appearing to be one-storey throughout. Roofs included both pitched tile and flat roof, with the brickwork older on the sections of the building associated with pitched roofs. Internal access was gained to a portion of this building, currently used as an external store to the public house. The roofing materials were viewable, with old support beams and roofing felt	2 – Missing mortar in ridge tile 6 – Mortar gaps in brickwork 14 – Roofing tile gaps 16 – Gap in lead flashing 19 – Lifted roofing felt 20 – Large gap between roofing panel and rendered wall 21 – Gap between fascia boarding and brickwork 22 – Gap between roofing tile and top brick of wall 23 – Missing bricks	Moderate

Building Reference	Building Description	Bat Roost Features and Figure 2 Reference Number	Bat Roost Suitability
	visible. Due to the presence of felt there was no light spill from the roof. No evidence of current or historic bat presence was recorded. The taller area of the building and the flat roof section were inaccessible but are used for storage purposes.	24 – Mortar gap between roofing beam and supporting bricks	

3.1.2 Local Ecological Records Centre

Data from Merseyside Biobanks returned 79 records of bats relating to at least four different bat species within 2km of the site, these include:

- Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*;
- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*;
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*; and
- Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*.

There are three roost records within 2km of the site:

- Unidentified bat species *Chiroptera sp.* recorded in 2011, 1.4km south-west;
- Common pipistrelle recorded in 2015, 1.4km north-east; and
- Pipistrelle species *Pipistrellus sp.* recorded in 1989, 1.9km south-east.

No granted EPSMLs were identified by MAGIC within 2km of the site.

3.2 Survey

3.2.1 Building 1

Dusk Emergence Survey 6th May 2020

The first bat recorded was a common pipistrelle seen at 21:17 (27 minutes after sunset), commuting along the north-eastern boundary and south along Holt Lane to the east of B1. Sporadic passes of one-two common pipistrelles were recorded and observed throughout the remainder of the survey, with foraging and commuting passes recorded. Activity was centred in the northern corner, north-western and north-eastern boundary of site, adjacent to residential gardens. Sound analysis revealed no other species were present. **No emergences were recording from any surveyor position.**

Dawn Re-entry Survey 27th May 2020

No activity was recorded during the survey. **No re-entries were recorded from any surveyor position.**

3.2.2 Building 2

Dusk Emergence Survey 14th May 2020

The first bat recorded was a commuting common pipistrelle at 21:38 (34 minutes after sunset), but this was not heard by surveyors as it was brief and quiet, therefore likely distant. A single commuting pass was recorded at 22:09 (1 hour, 5 minutes after sunset), but this was heard, not seen. Sound



analysis revealed no other species were present. **No emergences were recorded from any surveyor position.**

Dawn Re-entry Survey 9th June 2020

A single commuting common pipistrelle was recorded at 03:50 (57 minutes before sunrise) travelling from east of site to south-east boundary of the site. **No re-entries were recorded from any surveyor position.**

3.2.3 Other notable species

House sparrow *Passer domesticus* were recorded carrying nesting material into the north corner of B2. Historic pigeon *Columba sp.* nests are present in the southern corner of building B1.



4.0 Relevant Planning Policy & Legislation

4.1 Revised National Planning Policy Framework

A revised NPPF was issued on 19th February 2019 (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2019) and currently supplements government Circular 06/2005, *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005).

Circular 06/2005 states that the presence of protected species is a material consideration in the planning process. Paragraph 170 of the NPPF also states that:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland*
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.*

The conservation and enhancement of wildlife is also specifically reference re: development within the National Parks or the Broads.

Paragraph 174 then goes on to confirmed that:

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*



- c) *development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) *development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.*

Regarding EcIAs and HRAs – any sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on any Natura 2000/habitats site should also be given the same level as protection as the pSPAs and cSACs themselves. In addition, when an application is being determined, Paragraph 177 clarifies that:

"The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site."

Paragraph 180 is also relevant as;

Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:...

- c) *limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.*

4.2 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's Wildlife & Ecosystem Services

Biodiversity 2020 (DEFRA, 2011) replaces the previous UK Biodiversity Action Plan and sets national targets to be achieved. The intent of Biodiversity 2020, however, is much broader than the protection and enhancement of less common species and is meant to embrace the wider countryside as a whole.

The priority species and habitats considered under Biodiversity 2020 are the SPI & HPI detailed under NERC Act (see Section 4.5 for further details).

4.3 Local Biodiversity Action Plan

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) identify habitat and species conservation priorities at a local level (typically County by County) and are usually drawn up by a consortium of local Government organisations and conservation charities. Although they are no-longer managed at a national level many are still reviewed and updated at a local level.

The North Merseyside LBAP is the relevant document for this site, and it contains a Species Action Plan that covers all bat species found in the North Merseyside region.



It should be noted that the existence of a SAP or HAP does not always infer an elevated level importance for those features. These plans may be designed to encourage an increase in these habitats/species, rather than to protect a county-scarce feature (for example).

4.4 Local Plan

The Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Local Plan core strategy (adopted 2016) sets out a vision, key objectives and strategic planning policies for Knowsley up to and beyond 2028. Those policies relating to wildlife and protected sites and habitats are as follows:

Policy CS8 Green Infrastructure

Maintenance and Enhancement of Knowsley's Existing Green Infrastructure

1. *Knowsley's existing Green Infrastructure and its beneficial functions will be protected, managed and/or enhanced, primarily to:*
 - a. *Ensure more attractive and cleaner residential neighbourhoods;*
 - b. *Sustain and promote biodiversity (including designated sites, priority habitats and protected and endangered species) in accordance with importance and contribution to ecological networks;*
 - c. *Preserve the character and function of historic environments and valued landscapes;*
 - d. *Mitigate the effects of climate change and flood risk;*
 - e. *Mitigate air, water and noise pollution;*
 - f. *Provide local opportunities for sport, recreation and allotments; and*
 - g. *Provide sustainable transport linkages between residential neighbourhoods and easy access to employment and services.*
2. *To achieve the above, planning powers and other interventions will be used to:*
 - a) *Protect and enhance strategically important areas of greenspace;*
 - b) *Ensure an appropriate quantity and improved quality of locally important open spaces, including outdoor sports provision (and ancillary facilities of appropriate scale);*
 - c) *Promote effective movement of wildlife through a network of strategic green links, by protecting, maintaining and improving existing and new open spaces, water courses (including water quality) and biodiversity assets;*
 - d) *Protect, enhance and/or introduce biodiversity into existing areas of Green Infrastructure, through integration into the design of new development and public realm projects;*
 - e) *Improve accessibility for communities to greenspace offering leisure and recreation opportunities;*
 - f) *Protect and where possible improve green paths and cycleways linking residential areas, existing strategic areas of greenspace, employment locations, local community services and leisure facilities;*
 - g) *Work in partnership with other districts and relevant bodies at a landscape scale to minimise the impact of development upon Knowsley's existing biodiversity and geological assets, and sustain the protection afforded to internationally important sites, including supporting habitat, for biodiversity outside of the borough; and*
 - h) *Deliver new integrated and functional Green Infrastructure that helps to mitigate and adapt to climate change, such as sustainable drainage systems, carbon capture and storage, soft landscaping and green roofs.*
3. *Site allocations for greenspace will be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies document, with further guidance set out in the Developer Contributions*



Supplementary Planning Document or future Supplementary Planning Document as appropriate.

Strategic Green Links

4. *Knowsley's strategically important green links area*
 - a) *Alt Corridor (Huyton) – stretching from Huyton Village through South Alt Park, Alt Park, Alt Meadows and into Stockbridge Village;*
 - b) *Valley Corridor (Kirkby) – stretching through Valley Meadow, St. Chad's Park, Millbrook Park, Millennium Green and Mill Dam;*
 - c) *Whiston to Cronton Corridor – stretching through Cronton, Stadt Moers Park and Whiston Greenway;*
 - d) *Halewood Triangle – Halewood Park linkage with the Trans-Pennine Trail and to the national cycle network;*
 - e) *M57 Green Belt Corridor; and*
 - f) *Knowsley Hall Estate – including Knowsley Safari Park and Local Wildlife Sites.*

Green Infrastructure within the Liverpool City Region

5. *Knowsley Council will work with partners to help deliver local and sub-regional programmes, initiatives and strategies to enhance Green Infrastructure.*

Approach to Green Infrastructure and New Development

6. *New development must be served by Green Infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and the local environment, in a manner which will:*
 - a) *Contribute to the creation of a high quality residential environment;*
 - b) *Provide access to high quality open space for leisure and recreational purposes;*
 - c) *Seek to protect, maintain and where possible enhance biodiversity within and around new developments according to their designation and significance to provide space for nature; and*
 - d) *Provide adequate mitigation and/or, as a last resort, compensation for Green Infrastructure or biodiversity loss, in circumstances where harm resulting from the development is otherwise unavoidable.*

Policy CS21 Greenspaces and Trees

Greenspace protection

1. *In supporting the wider Green Infrastructure functions of urban greenspace in accordance with Policy CS8, the Council will provide and maintain quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards for different types of public open space.*
2. *New development which would result in the loss of urban greenspace, will not be permitted unless at least one of the following criteria are met:*
 - a) *A surplus of provision for all types of greenspace would be maintained relative to local standards;*
 - b) *The land is considered unsuitable in terms of size, location or character to prevent or address individual deficiencies of different types of greenspace relative to local standards;*
 - c) *Appropriate mitigation is provided through replacement facilities of at least an equal quantity, quality and accessibility;*



- d) *The development is required to improve greenspace provision or for ancillary facilities to support sport or recreation; or*
- e) *Where the proposal relates to the loss of indoor or outdoor sports provision, and there is no evidence of future or continuing need for sports use, or alternatively only land incapable of forming a playing pitch or sporting facility is affected and its release accords with either clause 2)a) or 2)b). 3)*
- 3. *Irrespective of whether criteria in 2) are met, unless the benefits of a proposal clearly outweigh the loss of urban greenspace, development will be resisted where it would significantly harm any existing or potential special qualities of greenspace in the area in terms of:*
 - a) *Visual amenity;*
 - b) *Residential amenity;*
 - c) *Biodiversity and environmental benefits;*
 - d) *Historical, cultural or community value;*
 - e) *Recreational benefits; or*
 - f) *Physical and/or visual linkages between adjoining urban greenspaces.*

Local Greenspace Standards

- 4. *The quantitative and accessibility standards for the provision of public open spaces within Substantial Residential Areas are set out in Table 9.1: Substantial Residential Area (SRA) Standards for Greenspace quantity and Accessibility for the following greenspace typologies:*
 - a) *Park and Garden;*
 - b) *Amenity Greenspace;*
 - c) *Provision for Children and Young People; and*
 - d) *Allotments.*
- 5. *The Council's quantitative standards for Outdoor Sports Provision are set out in Table 9.2: Community Area Standards for Outdoor Sports Provision Quantity and Accessibility and seek to maintain an appropriate range of sites and address quantitative needs for individual sports at a Community Area level.*
- 6. *The Council will keep the standards of provision referred to above under review and if necessary, publish revised standards in a future Local Plan document or Supplementary Planning Document.*

Accessible and Quality Greenspaces

- 7. *The Council will support improvements to existing and new areas of greenspace in accordance with best practice standards¹²⁷, to achieve the following requirements:*
 - a) *Accessible, safe and secure locations for all members of the community to use;*
 - b) *Clean and well-maintained facilities, equipment and open spaces; and*
 - c) *Conservation of natural features, wildlife, fauna, landscapes, buildings and other structural features, as appropriate.*
- 8. *When considering proposals for new residential development, the Council will seek enhancements to greenspaces via on-site provision, new off site provision or enhancement of existing off site provision through developer contributions secured by legal agreement in accordance with Policy CS27: Planning and Paying for New Infrastructure, the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document and/or a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, as appropriate.*

Local Green Spaces

- 9. *Any Local Green Spaces Designations which are formally designated will be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies or future Neighbourhood Plans (if applicable). This designation will only be used where the greenspace concerned is:*



- a) *Reasonably close to the community it serves;*
- b) *Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) *Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.*

Enhancement of Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace and Tree Protection

10. The Council will encourage proposals for new development to incorporate:

- a) *Retention of existing trees, woodland, vegetation and other habitat features which offer a positive contribution to the local environment in terms of visual amenity, recreation value or biodiversity/wildlife interest;*
- b) *Appropriate planting of trees, other soft landscaping and installation of habitat features for the benefit of biodiversity; and*
- c) *Adequate replacement provision where tree loss is unavoidable, comprising two additional trees for every tree lost and taking account of species and size.*

4.5 Legislation

All British bat species are given special protection within England by their inclusion on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

As a result, it is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or deliberately disturb a group of bats;
- Damage or destroy a bat's roosting place (even if bats are not occupying a roost at the time);
- Possess or advertise, sell or exchange a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat; and
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

Where development will result in damage to suitable habitat where the species is known to be present, or risk harming or significantly disturbing bats, an EPSML is likely to be required from NE to allow the development to proceed.

Bats are also afforded more general protection in England (and Wales) within the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act) 2006. This imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, "to have due regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity" [Section 40 (1)]. It notes that "conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat" [Section 40 (3)]. Consequently, attention should be given to dealing with the modification or development of an area if aspects of it are deemed important to bats, such as roosts, flight corridors and foraging areas.

Section 41 (S41) of this Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list (in consultation with NE) of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies including local and regional authorities, when carrying out their normal (e.g. planning) functions. The S41 list includes 65 habitats of principal importance and 1,150 species of principal importance.



Seven species of bat are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006; soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii* and noctule.



5.0 Discussion

5.1 Impacts

5.1.1 Roosting bats

No bats were observed emerging from or re-entering building B1 or building B2 during the dusk emergence and dawn re-entry surveys.

Roosting bats are therefore considered likely-absent from building B1 and B2. Therefore the demolition of building B2 and any refurbishment works of B1 can occur without further survey, licensing or mitigation.

In the unlikely event bats or evidence of roosting bats is discovered prior to or during these works, then works must cease immediately to avoid an offence being committed and a licensed bat ecologist consulted to determine an appropriate course of action.

If works do not begin by **6th May 2021** a bat building inspection and/or nocturnal surveys may be needed to update site conditions under the guidance of a licensed bat ecologist. See section 2.3 for further details.

5.1.2 Foraging and commuting bats

The site was assessed as having low suitability for commuting and foraging bats, with the semi-natural habitats on site being species poor and isolated from the wider area (WYG, 2020). Given that the areas on site to be affected by the proposed development (Appendix B) are building B2 and the hardstanding carpark it is thought that physical aspects of the site used by bats remain largely unaffected. However, there is the potential for increased levels of lighting which may affect the retained and proposed semi-natural habitats which may deter bats from site and therefore mitigation is required. Measures proposed for the site are given in Section 5.2.2 below.

5.1.3 Other notable species

All breeding wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) against intentional disturbance, damage and destruction during the nesting season (generally considered to be March to September inclusive, although some species (such as feral pigeon) are known to breed throughout the year).

Any demolition works (B2) or refurbishment works (B1) have the potential to destroy active birds' nests and disturb nesting birds, including house sparrow and pigeon. To prevent a breach of UK or European wildlife legislation it is recommended that any works that will likely disturb, damage or destroy an active nest be avoided during the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive) where possible. Please note that birds can nest outside of this season and therefore should any nests be identified or suspected to be present on site at any time, then works should cease and an ecologist contacted to attend site and provide advice on appropriate working methods.

Should site works require undertaking during the bird breeding season it is recommended that an ecologist conducts a check for nesting house sparrow, pigeon or other birds using the building in advance of any works commencing. If an active bird nest is identified, the ecologist will advise on suitable working methods and exclusion zones to restrict works on site. Measures will depend on the nature of the works in that areas as well as any bird species identified to be nesting. Note that



suitable working methods may result in delay(s) to undertaking site works within specific areas of site until the ecologist has advised that all the chicks have fledged.

Once a nesting bird check is completed, a 48-hour window will allow for site works to commence, should no active nests be identified. Should works cease for more than five days then a check for breeding birds should be repeated.

5.2 Mitigation and Enhancement

5.2.1 Roosting bats

Although no bats were recorded within building B2, it still possesses suitable features for bats. To mitigate for the loss of this building it is recommended that at least two Schwegler 1FF (or equivalent) are erected on the north-western aspect of the proposed convenience store. Types of bat boxes are shown in Appendix C. Boxes should be mounted at a height of 3-4m high and orientated to be exposed to the sun for at least part of the day.

Enhancement of roosting opportunities on site can be achieved by incorporating a further two bat boxes either on or within the new build convenience store or on the retained B1. **This is in line with the NPPF and Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Local Plan Core Strategy policy CS38 Green Infrastructure; and promotes species that are included on the North Merseyside LBAP.**

5.2.2 Foraging and commuting bats

Habitat Retention and Enhancement

The site is currently of low value for foraging and commuting bats. The current proposed site layout indicates there will be an increase in soft landscaping provision across the site. However, there is no indication as to species that will be incorporated. It is recommended therefore that planting consists of native, wildlife and bat friendly species (a list is provided in Appendix D). **This is in line with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Local Plan Core Strategy policy CS38 Green Infrastructure.** The north-eastern and north-western boundaries of the site were seen to be the areas where most bat activity occurred and therefore planting should be focussed on these areas.

Lighting Strategy

Artificial lighting has been proven to disturb bats and to have a negative impact on their ability to forage and commute to and from their roosts (Emery, 2008; BCT, 2009, ILP, 2018). The lighting strategy should be designed to limit artificial light disturbance on the commuting and foraging routes (i.e. north-west and north-east boundaries), with a change of no more than 1 lux. The following measures should be considered:

During construction phase:

- It is advised that no night-time working is undertaken between the months of April to October inclusive (during the bat active season), where possible; and
- If security lighting is necessary, lights triggered by motion sensors should be used and their coverage should be kept to a minimum (e.g. through use of lighting cowl).



During the operational phase:

- Consideration of the available lighting technology to minimise impacts on bats, i.e. use of LED lighting as it emits little UV light, and these lamps can be programmed to switch off, or dim at certain times (as opposed to high pressure sodium, mercury and white SON). These have been shown to have the least impact on bats (as well as invertebrates);
- Directional lighting where light spillage is avoided. Hoods / cowls can be used to direct light below the horizontal plane (ideally at an angle less than 70 degrees);
- Lights should be designed to be as low to the ground as possible (specifically not above 8m); and
- Lights switched off at night (particularly during the months of April to October inclusive when bats are active), or at least motion censored.

When designing a suitable bat-friendly lighting strategy, reference should be made to the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK.

5.2.3 Other notable species

It is recommended that at least two bird boxes (see Appendix C) are provided on site to compensate for the loss of B2. This may be pole mounted and ideally situated within soft landscaped areas. They should be mounted 2-3m high where possible and be placed where access is unobstructed. Additional boxes may be provisioned, including those that can be mounted on buildings to enhance nesting provision on site. **This is in line with the NPPF and Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Local Plan Core Strategy policy CS38 Green Infrastructure.**



6.0 References

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- WYG, (2020), *The Holt, Rainhill: Ecological Appraisal*, Report on behalf of Cordage Estates Limited, Project Number: A116532.



FIGURES

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

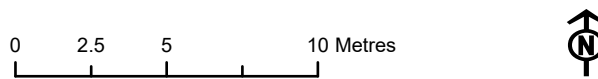
Figure 2 – Surveyor Positions



Rev	Date	Notes
A	17/06/20	Initial map production

Legend

- Site boundary
- Buildings
- Common pipistrelle flight line
- Bat roost potential feature
- B1 Surveyor location
- B2 Surveyor location
- (C) Commuting
- (F) Foraging



Survey Results

The Holt, Rainhill Cordage Estates Limited			
Scale at A3: 1:250	Project No: A116532	Drawing No: Figure 2	Revision: A
Drawn by: Martyn Stringer		Drawn date: 26/11/2021	Approved by: Danny Burrows

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C:\Users\martynstringer\OneDrive - Rain Hill\OneDrive\Projects\A116532 - The Holt\A116532_Fig2Rainhill.jpg



Appendix A – Report Conditions

This Report has been prepared using reasonable skill and care for the sole benefit of [Cordage Estates Limited] ("the Client") for the proposed uses stated in the report by [WYG Environment Planning Transport Limited] ("WYG"). WYG exclude all liability for any other uses and to any other party. The report must not be relied on or reproduced in whole or in part by any other party without the copyright holder's permission.

No liability is accepted or warranty given for; unconfirmed data, third party documents and information supplied to WYG or for the performance, reliability, standing etc of any products, services, organisations or companies referred to in this report. WYG does not purport to provide specialist legal, tax or accounting advice.

The report refers, within the limitations stated, to the environment of the site in the context of the surrounding area at the time of the inspections'. Environmental conditions can vary and no warranty is given as to the possibility of changes in the environment of the site and surrounding area at differing times. No investigative method can eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise, incomplete or not fully representative information. Any monitoring or survey work undertaken as part of the commission will have been subject to limitations, including for example timescale, seasonal and weather-related conditions. Actual environmental conditions are typically more complex and variable than the investigative, predictive and modelling approaches indicate in practice, and the output of such approaches cannot be relied upon as a comprehensive or accurate indicator of future conditions. The "shelf life" of the Report will be determined by a number of factors including; its original purpose, the Client's instructions, passage of time, advances in technology and techniques, changes in legislation etc. and therefore may require future re-assessment.

The whole of the report must be read as other sections of the report may contain information which puts into context the findings in any executive summary.

The performance of environmental protection measures and of buildings and other structures in relation to acoustics, vibration, noise mitigation and other environmental issues is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which the relevant environmental considerations are incorporated into the final design and specifications and the quality of workmanship and compliance with the specifications on site during construction. WYG accept no liability for issues with performance arising from such factors.



Appendix B – Proposed Site Layout (P7-Feb 2020 – Planning Application -JCB)



Appendix C – Wildlife Boxes

Introduction

The information in this appendix relates to bat and bird boxes that can be easily incorporated into building and landscape plans. The information provided is not exhaustive and provides examples of some of the types of boxes available.

Including bat and bird boxes throughout the development site has a number of benefits:

- Any roosting or resting places lost as a result of the work will be replaced;
- The ecological value of the site will be enhanced;
- Priority species within the UK and local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) will be encouraged.

Bats

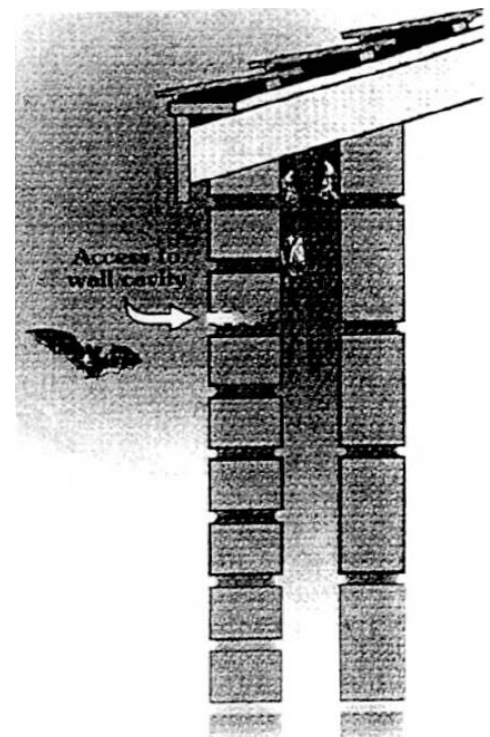
For Buildings

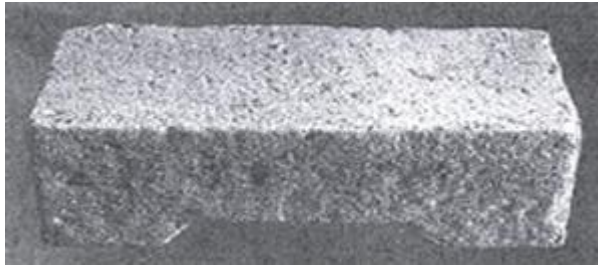
The inclusion of a variety of bat bricks, tubes and boxes for buildings is recommended to encourage a diversity of bat species. Bat bricks and tubes require no maintenance.

Bat Access and Roost Bricks

Source: Marshalls Clay Products (approved by the Bat conservation Trust)

'... Marshall Clay Products have been producing a Bat Access Brick specially designed to help the country's badly depleted bat population by provided access to wall cavities or roof spaces where most bat colonies tend to be (see diagram). In recent years bats have been declining at an alarming rate. Nearly all colonies tend to be on the outside of houses, in wall cavities, under slates, flashing or tiles, et c. ... Contrary to popular opinion, bats do not make pests and do absolutely no damage to buildings or roof timbers, indeed many people encourage bat colonies in their area because of the large number of insect pests, woodworm, et c. which they eat. Most colonises will use a house for only a few weeks in summer before dispersing in autumn.'





A Bat Brick should ideally be placed as high as possible at the gable apex or close to the soffit.

Marshall's Clay Products - Quarry Lane, Howley Park, Woodkirk, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 7JJ – Tel: (01132) 203535, Fax: (01132) 203555.

Marshall's Bat Access Brick, which is now also available in stone.

Bat Tube

Brick bat tubes are designed for buildings, or underneath bridges, arches or tunnels, where conditions are relatively humid. They are particularly useful for new buildings or bridges to attract bats, or to provide new roost sites where existing buildings with bats are being renovated.

This long box can be installed within brick masonry, beneath plasterwork or wood panelling, or incorporated into concrete structures such as factory buildings or bridges. Inside it contains a woodcrete surface, a roughened wood board, and a metal mesh, providing a choice of roosting areas depending on the weather conditions and the bats' habits. This box is maintenance-free as the entrance slit is at the bottom.

No painting required, but if painting is necessary a natural breathable paint should be used.

Width: 20cm; Height: 47.5cm; Depth: 12.5cm; Entrance Width: 15cm; Entrance Depth: 2cm; Weight: 13kg



Bat Box

This type of box is made of woodcrete and is expected to last approximately 25 years. It has a narrow crevice-like internal space to attract Pipistrelle and Noctule bats. Woodcrete (75% wood sawdust, concrete and clay mixture).

Width: 27cm; Height: 43cm; Weight: 8.3kg.



Harlech Woodstone Bat Box Small: Made from woodstone, the Harlech is a small cavity bat box that offers excellent insulation and minimum condensation for roosting bats.

Width: 15cm; Height: 27.5cm; Weight: 4kg.



Bird Boxes

A variety of bird box designs could be installed throughout the development site to attract a diversity of species. Open fronted boxes will attract species such as robins, pied wagtails and spotted flycatchers, while boxes with entrance holes will attract tits, wrens and tree sparrows. Roost pockets will be used by roosting birds over the winter and by smaller species, such as wrens, for nesting in the spring.

Open Fronted Boxes

This box is attractive to robins, pied wagtails, spotted flycatcher, wrens and black redstarts and is best sited on the walls of buildings with the entrance on one side.

These woodcrete boxes are designed to mimic natural nest sites and provide a stable environment for chick rearing and winter roosting. They can be expected to last 25 years or more without maintenance.



Boxes with Entrance Holes

This box is attractive to smaller birds such as tits, wrens and tree sparrows. Sparrow terraces are also available.





Appendix D – Wildlife Friendly Planting

Table 1: Trees, shrubs and climbers

Common name	Scientific name
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja sp.</i>
Common alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus sp.</i>
English oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Gorse	<i>Ulex sp.</i>
Guelder rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus sp.</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus sp.</i>
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus sp.</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera sp.</i>
Jasmine	<i>Jasminum sp.</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus sp.</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>

Table 2: Flowers for borders

Common name	Scientific name
Aubretia*	<i>Aubrieta sp.</i>
Candytuft*	<i>Iberis sp.</i>
Cherry pie*	<i>Heliotropium arborescens</i>
Corncockle	<i>Agrostemma githago</i>
Cornflower	<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>
Corn marigold	<i>Glebionis segetum</i>
Corn poppy	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>
Echinacea*	<i>Echinacea sp.</i>
English Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Evening primrose*	<i>Oenothera sp.</i>
Field poppies	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>
Honesty*	<i>Lunaria annua</i>
Ice plant 'Pink lady'*	<i>sedum spectabile</i>
Knapweed	<i>Centaurea sp.</i>
Mallow	<i>Malva sp.</i>
Mexican aster*	<i>Cosmos bipinnatus</i>
Michaelmas daisy*	<i>Aster novi-belgii</i>
Night-scented stock*	<i>Matthiola longipetala</i>
Ox-eye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Phacelia*	<i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>
Poached egg plant*	<i>Limnanthes douglasii</i>
Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>
Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Red valerian*	<i>Centranthus ruber</i>
Scabious	<i>Scabiosa sp.</i>
St John's wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>
Sweet William*	<i>Dianthus barbatus</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Tobacco plant*	<i>Nicotiana</i>
Verbena*	<i>Verbena sp.</i>
Wallflowers*	<i>Erysimum sp.</i>
Wood forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>

Plants marked * are hybrids or exotics

Table 3: Herbs

Common name	Scientific name
Angelica	<i>Angelica sp.</i>
Bergamot	<i>Monarda sp.</i>
Borage	<i>Borago officinalis</i>
Coriander	<i>Caroiandrum sp.</i>
English marigolds	<i>Calendula officinalis</i>
Fennel	<i>Foenicululm sp.</i>
Feverfew	<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>
Hyssop	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>
Lavenders	<i>Lavandula</i>
Lemon balm	<i>Melissa officinalis</i>
Marjoram	<i>Origanum majorana</i>
Rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>
Sweet cicely	<i>Myrrhis odorata</i>
Thyme	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i>

Table 4: Wildflowers for pond edges and marshy areas

Common name	Scientific name
Bog bean	<i>Menyanthes sp.</i>
Bugle	<i>Ajuga sp.</i>
Creeping Jenny	<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>
Flag iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>
Hemp agrimony	<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>
Lady's smock	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>
Marsh mallow	<i>Althaea officinalis</i>
Marsh marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>
Marsh woundwort	<i>Stachys palustris</i>
Meadowsweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>
Purple loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>
Water avens	<i>Geum rivale</i>
Water forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>
Water mint	<i>Mentha citrata</i>

(Source: 'Encouraging bats – Gardening for bats', Bat Conservation Trust, 2015)



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